

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 03323 141239Z

12

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 SCCT-01 OMB-01 ACDA-07 /085 W

----- 062027

O R 141158Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9584

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

USMISSION UN NY

CIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER IMMEDIATE

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK

COMSIXTH FLT

CTF SIX ZERO

CTF SIX ONE

CTF SIX TWO

CTF SIX ZERO PT TWO

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

FICEURLAND NORFOLK VA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 3323

STUTTGART FOR ELG

E.O. 11652: GDS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BEIRUT 03323 141239Z

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION APRIL 14: SYRIANS SHOW THEY MEAN
BUSINESS

REF: BEIRUT 3277 (131225Z APRIL 76)

1. FROM VARIOUS SOURCES WE HAVE CLEARER PICTURE OF THE SYRIAN MILITARY PENETRATION INTO LEBANON OVER PAST SEVERAL DAYS. AS FAR AS MASNEA, JUST A FEW KILOMETERS INSIDE BORDER, SYRIAN ARMY PRESENCE IS OPEN AND INCLUDES ARMOR. FROM MASNAA TO CHTAURA ON OTHER SIDE OF BEKAA VALLEY, PRESENCE BEING PUT OUT AS "PLA." THIS PRESENCE MAY WELL INCLUDE PLA PER SE, BUT IT HAS CERTAINLY BEEN BEEFED UP WITH SYRIAN ARMY; IT CONTROLS BEIRUT-DAMASCUS HIGHWAY CROSSING BEKAA AND REPORTEDLY VARIOUS POINTS NORTH AND SOUTH OF IGHWAY IN THE VALLEY. FROM CHTAURA WEST, UP INTO LEBANON RANGE, "PLA/SAIQA" ACTIVITY HAS SO FAR BEEN PATROLS ONLY. THESE PATROLS HAVE REPORTEDLY GONE SOMEWHAT BEYOND DAHR EL-BEIDAR, LIMIT OF PENETRATION REPORTED YESTERDAY. WE BELIEVE SYRIANS INTEND TO HALT ADVANCE AT THIS STAGE, AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING.

2. PICTURE REMAINS RELATIVELY QUIET ON GROUND THROUGHOUT LEBANON. COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY PICKED UP A BIT IN RAS BEIRUT YESTERDAY. HOWEVER, SNIPERS ARE STILL A MENACE IN PARTS OF BEIRUT AND EXCHANGES OF FIRE OCCUR SPORADICALLY IN AND AROUND CAPITAL. THERE ARE ALSO REPORTS OF BRIEF CLASHES DURING PAST 24 HOURS BETWEEN SAIQA AND REJECTIONIST PALESTINIAN GROUPS IN BEIRUT AND SIDON.

3. SYRIAN PRESIDENT ASSAD'S RECENT SPEECH IS DRAWING MUCH ATTENTION HERE. CHRISTIAN LEADERS HAVE PUBLICLY PRAISED IT, AND SOME CONSERVATIVE MOSLEMS HAVE WELCOMED IT PRIVATELY. JUMBLATT, HOWEVER, IS SAID TO BE FURIOUS. HE WAS REPORTEDLY ON POINT OF ISSUING FORMAL REBUTTAL, UNTIL ARAFAT TALKED HIM OUT OF IT.

4. THE PLO LEADER WAS ACTIVE YESTERDAY, SEEING NOT ONLY JUMBLATT BUT ALSO KARAME, SALAM, IMAM MUSA SADR, AND SPEAKER ASSAD. ARAFAT AND OTHER PALESTINIANS SEEM TO BE MOVING MORE AND MORE INTO INTER-MEDIARY ROLE BETWEEN UMBLATT AND SYRIA. A PLO DELEGATION MAY GO TO DAMASCUS SOON WITH THIS AIM IN MIND. THE SIGNAL THAT PRESIDENT ASSAD HAS GIVEN, BOTH THROUGH THE SPEECH AND TROOP MOVEMENTS, THAT HE MEANS BUSINESS IN LEBANON HAS NOT BEEN LOST ON THE SQUABBLING PARTIES HERE.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BEIRUT 03323 141239Z

5. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION POLITICS GRINDING ON SLOWLY. ACCORDING TO ONE KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCE, MARONITE LEADERS ARE STILL LOOKING AT POSSIBLE CANDIDACY OF CAMILLE CHAMOUN, THOUGH MOST NEUTRAL OBSERVERS CONSIDER THIS A TACTICAL PLOY AND THE KATAEB IS SAID TO BE UNENTHUSIASTIC. COMBINATION OF NATIONAL LIBERAL, KATAEB, FRANGIE, AND ASSOCIATED VOTES WOULD FORM BLOC OF ABOUT 30, WHICH COULD EITHER PUCH CHAMOUN OR BE THROWN TO SOMEBODY ELSE. FRANGIE, GEMAYEL, AND CHAMOUN ARE DUE TO MEET TODAY TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO MAKE

CHAMOUN'S BID OFFICIAL. SYRIAN VIEW OF CHAMOUN CANDIDACY
UNKNOWN.

6. SPEAKER ASSAD MEANWHILE IS PURSUING HIS TACTIC OF FORMING
UNCOMMITTED BLOC. REPORTED ADHERENCE OF GROUP OF ARMENIAN DEPUTIES
WOULD BRING BLOC TO SLIGHTLY OVER 30. ASSAD'S PLAN IS SAID TO BE
CREATION OF A "THIRD FORCE" PUSHING FOR EITHER (A) WITHDRAWAL OF ALL
BUT ONE OF LEADING CONTENDERS WHO WOULD WIN UNANIMOUSLY, OR (B)
CONSENSUS ON COMPROMISE NAME WHO WOULD WIN UNANIMOUSLY.

7. FRANGIE STILL HASN'T SIGNED THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT,
BUT IS EXPECTED TO DO SO BETWEEN NOW AND SATURDAY. HE APPARENTLY
WANTS TO DEMONSTRATE THAT HE WON'T BE HURRIED.
BROWN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMISTICE, INTERVENTION, CIVIL DISORDERS, COMBAT OPERATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BEIRUT03323
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760141-0550
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760464/aaaaccjs.tel
Line Count: 129
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 BEIRUT 3277
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 MAR 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <17 AUG 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LEBANESE SITUATION APRIL 14: SYRIANS SHOW THEY MEAN BUSINESS
TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006